

THE  
PSYCHOLOGICAL REVIEW.

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AUGUST, 1881.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

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THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS  
AND THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

On Tuesday evening, the 26th July, a meeting of the "Conference Committee," comprising the whole of the Council, was held at the Association's Rooms in Great Russell St., W.C. The resolution appointing this committee was worded thus:—"That the proposal to hold a Conference be referred to a Committee of the whole Council, and any members of the Association who may be invited, to report to the next Council meeting as to the advantage of holding such a Conference, the special form it should take, and the arrangements that would be necessary." It was moved by Mr. E. T. Bennett, seconded by Mrs. Fitz-Gerald, and carried unanimously.

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"PUBLIC OPINION" ON "THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REVIEW."

It may interest some of our readers to know what outsiders think of us, so subjoined we give a notice that appeared in *Public Opinion* for July 16th, 1881.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REVIEW. (New Issue.)—The memories of the old *Psychological Review* were not brilliant; and the present issue (or revival) starts with a clean bill of health. We see too much in it of mere ghosts, that are not much in request at this period of the nineteenth century, and we are heartily sick of the stock arguments in favour of some doctrine of immortality that is advocated by some writers, and which perhaps is not the same as the doctrine of immortality that is accepted by the majority of Western

philosophers. Still we ought to be grateful for the high philosophy and competent literary tone that is taken by the new issue. We have no sort of idea how such a high class literary organ of the more rational description of students of the science of mind was wanted. A careful and moderate examination of most of the problems that the next generation of metaphysicians will have to solve, shows that a reaction has already set in against the crude materialism that reached its culminating point about ten years ago. We have now before us all that is known of the phenomena of mind, and those persons who wish to study them in their entirety according to the laws that Collyer and Massey have indicated will find that the *Psychological Review* places at their disposal a sound series of accurately acquired facts, some of which are worthy the consideration of scientific men of the calibre of Crookes and Wallace.

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#### A NEW WORK BY MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN.

We are glad to be able to accede to Mrs. Hardinge Britten's request to give publicity to the following—

*EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN, to her Friends and Co-workers  
in the Spiritual Movement.*

For many years past, I have been collecting materials for a compendious History of the MODERN SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT, as it has transpired ALL OVER THE WORLD in the Nineteenth Century. This Work I have been requested to undertake—no matter what other publications of a kindred character might be issued—by those beloved spirit-friends who have never deceived me, or failed to inspire me for good. Those who are most thoroughly acquainted with me will remember how often I have stated that I only obey the commands of spirits when they accord with my own judgment, especially when they relate to the Movement, of which they are the Authors and Promoters. The present occasion is one which fully meets this question.

Wise and good spirits desire to give to the age, through my instrumentality, a thoroughly exhaustive Record of the Work they have accomplished in the Nineteenth Century, and the reasons they have alleged for this charge, together with the methods prescribed for its accomplishment, having appealed forcibly to my best judgment, I have—as above stated—employed the last few years of my wide wanderings in gathering up, from every available and authentic source, the necessary materials for my great task.

As it has been furthermore made clear to me that the present time has been specially designed for its commencement, I would now solicit, from those who may be interested in it, such literary contributions, of a personal or local character, as each one may be impressed to send. I do not promise to use all that I may thus receive, because the ultimate selection of matter for publication must necessarily exclude, at least, nine per cent. of the vast mass I have

to select from. Still I should be glad to avail myself of the widest possible field of information on this deeply momentous subject, especially as I propose to add to the general History a large number of brief Biographical Sketches of such Personages as have been prominently and usefully connected with it.

Trusting that the Friends of Spiritualism will aid me as far as possible in the accomplishment of a work which gratitude to the Spiritual Founders of the Movement, no less than justice to posterity, imperatively demand,—I am ever, reverently and faithfully, the servant of God and the angels,

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

P.S.—Prepaid postal matter can be addressed to my residence—  
The Limes, Humphrey Street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester, England.  
(Foreign Journals please copy.)

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#### A VINDICTIVE SPIRIT OVERRULED BY A SUPERIOR POWER.

MR. A. S. NEWTON, an American spiritualist, who was well-known to readers of the old *Spiritual Magazine* whilst treating in a recent number of the *Banner of Light* on evil spirits and their powers, narrates a curious and instructive story as to how vindictive spirits may be overruled by powers superior to themselves. He says:—

“A medium was once, in the writer’s presence, controlled by a spirit who claimed to have been recently ejected from his body by violence—the victim of a secret and foul murder. He expressed the most intense feeling of revenge toward his murderer, and wished to expose him by name, in order that he might be “brought to justice” before an earthly tribunal. But every time he attempted to utter the name, he (or the medium’s tongue) was restrained by some power that the spirit could not understand—doubtless a wiser spirit whose presence he was unable to perceive. After repeated attempts, baffled and enraged, he uttered fearful imprecations on his enemy, and, declaring he would find another medium through whom he could give the name, suddenly withdrew. So far as I know this spirit never succeeded in making the disclosure. Such disclosures are rarely made, though nothing would seem easier, or, to many people, more desirable, if spirits thus wronged can communicate freely. But probably a higher wisdom sees that this would not be for the best.”

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#### DR. CAIRD ON A FUTURE LIFE.

In the recently published volume, “Scotch Sermons,” Dr. Caird has the following:—

“It needs little reflection to perceive that the whole order of things in which we live is constructed, not on the principle that we are sent into this world merely to prepare for another, or that the paramount effort and aim of every man should be to make ready for

death and an unknown existence beyond the grave. On the contrary, in our own nature and in the system of things to which we belong, everything seems to be devised on the principle that our interest in the world and human affairs *is not to terminate at death*. It is not, as false moralists would have us believe, a mere illusion, a proof only of the folly and vanity of man, that we do not and cannot feel and act as if we were to have no concern with this world the moment we quit it. . . . *Be the change which death brings what it may, he who has spent his life in trying to make this world better can never be unprepared for another*; if heaven is for the pure and holy, if that which makes men good is that which best qualifies for heaven, what better discipline in goodness can we conceive for a human spirit, what more calculated to elicit and develop its highest affections and energies, than to live and labour for our brother's welfare? To find our deepest joy, not in the delights of sense, nor in the gratification of personal ambition, nor even in the serene pursuits of culture and science, nay, *not even in seeking the safety of our own souls*, but in striving for the highest good of those who are dear to our Father in Heaven, . . . say, can a nobler school of goodness be discovered than this?"

#### CARLYLE ON HIS FATHER'S DEATH.

The following stirring words, written by the Chelsea Sage soon after the departure of his father from the earthly life, will find an echo in many a heart, as they go to show that Carlyle in his highest moods rose superior to the doubts, fault-finding, and peevishness which perplexed him in his later days:—

"I shall now no more behold my dear father with these bodily eyes. With him a whole three score and ten years of the past has doubly died for me. It is as if a new leaf in the great book of time were turned over. Strange time—endless time; or of which I see neither end nor beginning. All rushes on. Man follows man. His life is as a tale that has been told; yet under Time does there not lie Eternity? Perhaps my father, all that essentially was my father, is even now near me, with me. Both he and I are with God. Perhaps, if it so please God, we shall in some higher state of being meet one another, recognise one another.

"All that was earthly, harsh, sinful in our relation has fallen away; all that was holy in it remains. I can see my dear father's life in some measure as the sunk pillar on which mine was to rise and be built; the waters of time have now swelled up round his (as they will round mine); I can see it all transfigured, though I touch it no longer. I might almost say his spirit seems to have entered into me (so clearly do I discern and love him); I seem to myself only the continuation and second volume of my father. Three days that I have spent thinking of him and his ends are the peaceablest, the only Sabbath I have had in London."

MONTHLY SUMMARY  
OF  
CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUAL OPINION.

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“SPIRITUALIST.”

(June 24. July 1, 8, 15, 22.)

The controversy that was evoked by the publication of an elaborate review of Mr. Sinnett's work appears to have become endless. The editor of the *Spiritualist* had thrown doubt on the existence of the Hindu brothers, who Mr. Sinnett considered to play an important part in the rôle of the curious manifestations deposed to by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott. Accordingly “C. C. M.” whose initials are identifiable to friends, appeared on the scene, and in two or three letters, written with force, pointed out the real state of the case, and the manner wherein the laws of evidence were applicable to the matter. The controversy might have ended here, as the editor of the *Spiritualist* had evidently devoted no especial time to the subject, had it not been for an unfortunate “J. K.” who appears to have allowed himself, without contradiction, to have been announced as an “Adept,” and to have favoured the world with a description of the mode in which the universe should be run on the fixed principles indicated by his school of theosophy. This produced one of the customary inevitable exposures, and another disagreeable subject has been added to the secret pigeonholes of *Spiritualist* literature. The subject has been further complicated by reference to certain alleged phenomena supposed to have taken place some years ago, through Mrs. Guppy, but which appear not to have been observed under precise test-conditions, however honest and sincere the *bond fides* of the parties may have been. Further, to render more unpleasant a controversy that can scarcely help being a personal one, we have another controversialist “Theosophist” who ventilates his own scheme of theology in terms that we should be glad to see translated into some known language. Signor Rondi continues some curious “Physical manifestations at Rome” that appear to be well authenticated. An article signed “W.” on “Spiritualism in the Roman Catholic Church” appears not to be very precise, and a careful perusal of the classical work of Gury, and the controversial essays of Pianciani, might have saved the author from speaking with authority. The “unabridged autobiography” of St. Theresa is not usually quoted, or quotable, on this subject; and perhaps the Bollandists under date (October 15) have said all that can be said on the subject. We notice

that the editor of the *Spiritualist* considers the reform of the law in England, and suggests that the distinction between barristers and solicitors should be done away with. The precise connection of this scheme with Spiritualism may be left to the barristers and solicitors concerned. The New York correspondent of the *Springfield Republican* gives two ghost stories, one of which relates to a hard-headed matter-of-fact policeman, who saw a light in one of the middle-class localities of New-York; went down the step to see if the outer door was locked, stepped through the hall into the room where the light was, and saw a phantom in white sitting in the middle of the floor. The phantom is informed that the door is open, and instead of replying, she rises and passes through a small door in the wall. This door leads to a *cul de sac*. The policeman further finds a coloured servant asleep in the neighbouring kitchen. The servant being asleep, has not seen the ghost, and alleges that she put out the light at 9 p.m. It is hardly necessary to say that from information subsequently received by the policeman, it is said that a woman had been murdered in the house years before, and that her spirit made periodical visits, some of which had been observed by the negro woman. Another case is apparently one of an *incubus*, where a woman wakes up early in the morning with a chill, and experiences for several minutes after a sense of choking. This occurred again and again, and to add to her amazement, her maid, who slept in the adjoining chamber, told her one morning that she had distinctly seen the figure of a young woman at her bedside, and that it had vanished as soon as she had spoken to it. The maid was so terrified that she refused to stay any longer, and her mistress secured another servant who saw the same ghost and was likewise frightened away. It is not said if the first servant had an opportunity of communication with the second one. Mr. A. Constantine gives a story, originally in the *Theosophist*, interesting, as showing the principle of communication between friends at a distance. It appears that the author had conceived an attachment for a friend, who was at a sanitarium at Rambagh (on the other side of Agra). Mr. Constantine visited his brother-in-law at Meerut. Suddenly a curious sensation came over him, he felt dull and melancholy, and told his brother-in-law that he must return to Agra immediately. His wife urged him to go to the intermediate station at Ghaziabad (whence the train branches off to Delhi). He did so, but no sooner was the train in motion than the longing to go to Agra recommenced. Without taking any further course, he secured on his arrival at Ghaziabad tickets direct for Agra. At Allyghur his wife left

him, and the husband proceeded to Agra where, on his arrival, he learnt the news that his friend had suddenly died that very morning from apoplexy at Rambagh, probably about the time that he was taking refreshment at Meerut. The persons at the funeral plied him with questions as to how he came to hear of the death, and who it was that telegraphed to him. He declares that no other communication or message was ever sent to him, save a depression in spirits and a desire to be present in Agra as soon as possible. A paragraph in the *Spiritualist* relates to the unforeseen reverses of a worthy and honourable man (Christian Reimers, Esq., 47 Mornington Road, N.W.) who really needs the assistance of friends in aiding him to continue his profession as a music-teacher. This paragraph is perhaps of more importance to the movement than pages of empty discussion on theosophy, a subject whereon none of the combatants, with the solitary exception of "C. C. M.", appear to have any precise knowledge. The persons who are qualified to judge have their own scientific experiments; and are very careful not to permit them to be joined in by the advocates of any preconceived theory. In fact, they have a right to their own private opinions and practices. We have also in the last number of the *Spiritualist* some memoranda of rather a loose and imperfect character, taken at some séances that occurred with Mr. Home a few years ago. It is a great pity that these séances should ever have been allowed to be unscientifically recorded; but (asking our readers to assume the veracity of this account) we may just notice that there was nothing that in the slightest way approached to test-conditions, and that the persons present at the séance are not described by definite names. "Rock Oil and Religion" is an article of the funny sort that we do not like to read in the present condition of the science; and to say the least such writing does not grace the pages of our contemporary.

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"L I G H T."

(June 25. July 2, 9, 16.)

*Light* contains some thoughtful articles. Mrs. A. J. Penny continues her papers on "Böhme and Swedenborg." It is announced that the Council of the B.N.A.S. are about to initiate a Conference of Spiritualists, to be held at London during the approaching autumn. *Light* considers that it would not be difficult to find a common bond of sympathy and a common ground of united action. But experience of some of these conferences has convinced us that there has been a good deal of vinous effervescence, some of it extremely

good ; that a majority has applauded and coincided with the views of the minority, of whom each individual spoke more than once, and that the subject has not been advanced. Real workers prefer to do their own labour by themselves, each man being responsible to himself and to his Maker for the quantity and value of his labour. To take the British Association for the Advancement of Science. The money grants have been useful to workers, and hundreds of dwellers in country towns have enjoyed the spectacle of eminent scientific men capering before them, and giving their autographs gratis. But although the festival has been amusing, the real work of the scientific men has been done elsewhere. It is so with Spiritualism. A "Country Spiritualist" writes a very good letter on "Materialising Mediums," wherein the distinction between "materialisation" and "form manifestation" (originally pointed out by Miss Kislingbury many years ago in a letter in the *Spiritualist*, and since then first denied, then appropriated, and now misinterpreted by succeeding writers); and the evidence that on one occasion Mr. C. C. Massey drew the supposed materialised spirit into the room, under the gas, and saw clearly that it was the medium in an unconscious trance, is again brought forward. A "Country Spiritualist" seems to agree with "M. A. (Oxon)" in advocating the abolition of cabinets, and is of opinion that the movement of a table in the light, the production of direct writing in closed slates in full light; replying on walls, doors, or elsewhere, away from the medium; or intelligent messages spelt through the movement of the table, are more convincing, and scientifically valuable, than any number of the unsatisfactory so-called materialisation séances where the conditions are favourable to deception, and where it is impossible to decide whether the manifestations are genuine spirit efforts or the result of the action of the medium. A very useful abstract from the *Journal of Science* is given, showing the method by which the professional "muscle reader" manages to perform tricks like those of Bishop, who appears to have plagiarised his scheme from one Brown, who gave the same performance many years ago in America. There is a letter signed "Ferguson," giving an account of some good phenomena of slate-writing with a medium named Phillips, in New York. A letter appears on Spiritualism in Calcutta, giving an account of some séances attended by Baboo Pearychand Mittra, and other persons, wherein the spirit of the brother of B. P. Mittra appeared, and gave proof which was satisfactory to him. The medium was a young patient of a homœopathic physician, and is stated to have been obsessed. Professor Barrett gives his experiments in thought-reading

that appear to be very careful. They were carried on without the contact of the hands, or of any communication besides the air, between the person operating, and the subject operated upon. We see in the list of honorary or corresponding members of the B.N.A.S. the name inserted of a person who has been dead more than three months, and we wish that we could say that this was the first time that a similar "enlargement of exactitude" had taken place. *Light* contains some very fair notes of the country spiritual press, and we are inclined to consider that the "Notes by the Way" are of especial value. In these paragraphs the conductors take notice of all that concerns Spiritualism in current literature and events, and when the history of the movement comes to be written, all this will be of no small value. We consider, however, that space is wasted by the consideration (apparently with approval) of such writers as Ingersoll, whose arguments against immortality read badly in a literary point of view. The world has outgrown the style of Toland. Ingersoll would have done well in the eighteenth century, but is quite out of place now; and Spiritualists, above all others, should discuss their science with patience and good temper.

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"MEDIUM."

(June 25. July 1, 8, 15.)

The *Medium* is rather good this month. Mr. G. Brown gives us a record of the materialisations obtained through the mediumship of Mr. J. Fitton, when forms appeared that have been termed "Dr. Scott," and of which the manifestations are analogous to those of the familiar "John King." The medium and the spirit appear to have been visible at the same time, but the account is not clear. The so-called cabinet merely consists of one corner of the room, in front of which are two curtains. Mr. Westgarth, of Ashington Colliery, Northumberland, also appears to be a medium of some importance. Here also, both the medium and the form, were seen standing together for fully five minutes, the form keeping the curtains of the cabinet back. It went gradually away. The *Medium* contains a discourse purporting to have been inspired by the late George Thompson, on the reception into spirit-life of the late Thomas Carlyle and Benjamin Disraeli. Mrs. Nosworthy, the daughter of the late Mr. Thompson, certifies that the style is eminently characteristic of her deceased father's estimate of Benjamin Disraeli, both as author and statesman. The communicating influence appears to have had vehement political opinions. Our own impression of the utterances of the sturdy

old Liberal M.P. for the Tower Hamlets was, that there was more precision, and less verbiage in his manner of talking. But the account wherein these utterances are permeated by the spirit of the medium (especially so far off as Chicago) makes it impossible to generalise too rapidly that Carlyle and Beaconsfield were mere assumed names of elementaries, and that if they had been evolved through some other medium in Cheyne Row, or at Hughenden, they would have uttered different expressions. Lord Beaconsfield appears, according to the *Medium*, to be having a busy time of it, as Mr. J. G. Robson of Peckham, writes out his address "to the People of England." No person apparently has yet indorsed this as in anything like the style of Disraeli, and we predict that few will. That one of the greatest masters of literary style should be in a condition to forget that a verb should agree with its nominative case, is touching. That he could have forgotten the English language is the argument which must be assumed by supporters of the identity of the present communication. The more important part of the *Medium* indicates that the subscription set on foot for Mr. Burns already assumes important proportions, and that there is no sign of it flagging for many weeks to come, when the founder of the "Spiritual Institution" will, we hope, reap the reward of his long and persevering labour.

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"HERALD OF PROGRESS."

(June 25, July 1, 8, 15.)

The important article in this paper records a séance with Miss Wood, for the purpose of "weighing the spirit." We transcribe the statement as published apparently from the editorial pen:—

"On Sunday, June 12th, I attended Miss Wood's séance, held on the premises of the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society, in this town. There were twelve persons present, three of whom were strangers to the town. I weighed Miss Wood on the machine presented to the society by Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Manchester. She weighed 7st. 3lbs., after which she went into the closet, and the séance managers requested two of the strangers to lock the door of the closet in which Miss Wood was to be secured, which they did, and I verified for my own satisfaction. The light was amply sufficient to allow us to see each sitter in the circle, all of whom were at least from four to six feet from the closet door. Miss Wood was thereby completely isolated in a closet over which she has no control whatever. After sitting a short while, a form

in white garments, *very similar in height to the medium*, appeared in view, and presently walked round the circle, shaking hands with most present. I requested it to get on the machine, to allow me to weigh it; but by an inclination of the head it declined. It then retired behind the screen, to be followed by a very diminutive form, *considerably lower in stature than the medium, though certainly not lower assuming it were the medium's form on its knees*. After essaying to talk with us for about five minutes, it also instantly withdrew behind the screen, and almost simultaneously a form, *similar in height to the medium*, appeared at a distance of about three feet to the left of the spot where the small form withdrew. I requested this form also if it would permit me to weigh it, and it signalled it would do so after it had gathered sufficient power. The machine was placed in front, but at a distance of about four feet from the closet door. It glided to the machine, and after ascending the scale, I asked it to tuck in its garments at the feet, that we might all see that it was fairly and squarely on the scale, and that it would fold its arms across its breast, so that others around might see for themselves that it did not tamper with the register. The form complied with these conditions. I weighed it, and found it to register  $37\frac{1}{2}$  lbs., or about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  st. short of Miss Wood's weight. Like the preceding appearances, it also withdrew behind the screen, and in about three minutes more Miss Wood (in the mesmeric condition) intimated the séance was finished, whereupon the two strangers and myself went to the closet door, *which we found still locked*, and the medium inside. I have not the slightest doubt in my own mind of the genuineness of the facts just recorded, that is, that there were no accomplices aiding and abetting Miss Wood, that Miss Wood had no apparatus by which she could have got out of the closet and fastened herself in again without its disclosing itself, that there are no secret springs or passages connected with the closet, and that Miss Wood has no access or control over it, as it is kept locked by the society, and opened by the managers of the séance for experimental purposes only."

Such a fact as this is perhaps worth the rest of the whole paper. The eternal discussion on "Orthodox Spiritualism" progresses, Mr. Enmore Jones having apparently the best of the argument; at least he writes in the most intelligible style. He is rather satirical on the message that Dr. Hitchman has received from Zoroaster, who says "the creed of Orthodox Spiritualism is, Live a life of pure thoughts, pure words, and pure deeds." Mr. E. Jones asks, "Does Dr. Hitchman really know that Zoroaster sent the message? Was the creed in Persian?

If not, how and when did Zoroaster learn English? And how did the message come?" He has further nailed his opponents to some definition of "What is Spiritualism?" Mr. Wallis had asked "What is Orthodox?" and Dr. Hitchman, of Liverpool, had informed us "what orthodox is," but the question under discussion was and is the "definition of Spiritualism." A. T. T. P. continues his series of "Historical Controls." This one refers to John Selden. The spirit speaks of "*De Syrūso Deis Syntagmata duo*" (sic), and A. T. T. P. appends the note, "I cannot discover whether he did write such a book." Of course not; but most ordinary mortals were aware without supreme intellectual effort that Selden did write a book, "*De Diis Syris Syntagmata Duo*." The copy before us was printed at Leyden in 1629, and the book was common, popular, and cheap. Certainly the style of the control is in clear nervous English, such as John Selden may have written. But it must not be forgotten that A. T. T. P. himself writes very good English, though the fact is worthy of record that he states that his own mind has never dwelt one moment on Selden or his doings. The publication of these controls in the *Herald of Progress* forms one of the most interesting parts of the work. It also contains many fine translations from foreign magazines that are well selected, and indicate a high literary tone.

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"REVISTA DE ESTUDIOS PSICOLOGICOS."

(January to June, 1881.)

Six numbers of the Barcelona monthly are before us. Perhaps the best notion of the tone of the Spanish circle of La Paz may be taken in the "hymn of the resurrection," which communication was received on the "evocation of a spirit." There is nothing in it respecting the identity of the individual, nor information vouchsafed as to his present locality, but many pious reflections of a devotional nature to the Deity. A very important article appears on a recent legal case in England, wherein Señor Luis Piocemala arrives at the conclusion, after deep investigation, that there was no real spiritualism in the matter, and gives his reasons for affirming that the convicted person was neither a spiritualist nor a medium. We would rather not have referred to this matter, though we perceive that the Spanish take an interest in the questions of the science in England. An enormous amount of space is given in this periodical to the philosophy of Allan Kardec, who occupies to Spaniards and some French a higher position even than Swedenborg in the more Teutonic countries. The

death of M. Leon Favre Clavairoz on the 10th April last, is duly chronicled. This Barcelona paper is full of useful matter, though a little verbose.

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**"LICHT, MEHR LICHT; PSYCHOLOGISCHES SONNTAGSBLATT."**  
(June 26, July 3, 10, 17.)

The chief feature of this paper is the accurate systematisation of anecdotes, all of which are well told, and carefully arranged. The chief article in all the numbers before us is a record of the progress of the Theosophical Society in India. To European readers who have not the *Theosophist* before them, this abridgement will be of some service. The experiences of an Evangelical clergyman with the spirits are amusing, and appear to reflect a great deal of the thoughts of the recorder. He urges the uncertainty of most of the arguments that were at his disposal previously to the spirit revelation. M. Eugene Bonnemère gives us an article—"God is charity"—that illustrates his idea of the life and sayings of Christ. M. Lenker continues his series of articles on the information that a spirit gives of the things of the spiritual life, and illustrates the idea that the communicating intelligence (what, and how given, we are not told) has of the method of the spiritual propaganda. Though *Licht mehr Licht* has not the elasticity of its early numbers, and though it may, perhaps, be of a certain sameness, the conductors have a very brilliant prospect before them. A German newspaper of Spiritualism in Paris has in many respects to compete with the French journals that are devoted to the subject. And the writers in *Licht mehr Licht* have not shown the German tendency to investigate facts, but to fly at once to the conclusions of the subject. Yet we recognise in this paper a broader description of thought than is usual in some of the avowed spiritual organs, and a spirit of charity towards all parties (even the Re-incarnationists) that indicates something more than a mere surface badge-wearing of Spiritualism. The platform of *Licht mehr Licht* may not be very clear, but it is associated with thoroughly liberal scientific views.

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**"REVUE SPIRITE."**  
(July.)

The report presented to the annual meeting of the scientific society of psychological studies by the secretary show the careful work now being done by the French society. Its attention has been chiefly devoted to mesmeric experiments, that it regards as the foundation of experimental psychology,

and of which the elementary facts have, according to the writer, been verified in the hospitals and discussed in the Sorbonne. Some experiments have been carried on of placing loose weights on the table, near the edge and the medium, and the table has been lifted as usual. It appears that the experiments of the society usually terminate with an evocation séance, in which the forms produced (who are not particularly described to us) are recognised by interested parties. M. Thomas, a municipal councillor at Agen, gives a very careful account of certain physical phenomena that he has observed through the mediumship of a young girl, Gignoux. After her hands were tied, raps were heard beating the time of popular tunes; subsequently cards were written on in the handwriting and orthography of the medium, and a stick beat on a tambourine. The bed on which the child lay, rolled in the clothes, was moved forwards, and the child thrown out on the floor. A snuff-box being placed, with a penny outside it, the penny was placed inside the box. A paper of snuff was placed near the box, and the spirit was requested to empty it into the box without letting a grain fall. This experiment was tried inversely with the same result, and repeated ten times. Action of a stick outside the child's bed was watched, and the stick obeyed the volition of the recorder by moving to and fro. A knot was tied in ribbon outside the mechanical influence of the child. If some of these experiments remind us a little of those recounted by Zöllner, we are glad to see them repeated with other mediumship than that of Slade. M. Fauvety gives his idea of the events which led Littré, the great French positivist, to acknowledge on his deathbed the existence of other forces than those capable of analysis according to material laws. With him at evening-time there was light.

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"MESSAGER" (OF LIEGE).

(July 1, 15.)

This continues the history of the Buddha Sakyamuni. The materialist school had pretended that Moksha or Nirvana was the entire destruction of the body and the soul, that is to say, a dogma of negation opposed to the dogma of immortality. Such an hypothesis has against it not only all the texts, all the symbolic representations of Nirvana in the scriptures found in the most ancient pagodas, and in the basreliefs of the sacred chariots, but is even repugnant to common-sense. How can we imagine that the four or five hundred millions of worshippers of Buddha or of Brahma do not offer prayers and sacrifices to their deity; that the yogis and fakirs only impose

on themselves the most severe privations, and the most frightful suffering to obtain total annihilation. If everything is but material, if these men do not believe in immortality, they have only to let their lives peaceably become extinct, when they will arrive certainly at this final annihilation, without the need of undergoing any suffering whatever. The news in the *Messager* is not good. We see a long quotation from the "*Revue Britannique*" about Mr. W. I. Bishop. We do not know whether this paper is in any English press directory. At least, we have not yet found it. We note the fact, new to us, that a new spiritual paper is published at Palma, in Spain, termed the *Spiritismo*. The conductors of the *Messager* have had the bad taste to republish the extraordinary lines of Victor Hugo, commencing "*Il sied de ressembler aux dieux*," on which we can only remark that a false quantity is given to the Arabic word *ulema*. An instance is given of the appearance of figures and letters on the left cheek of Madame Marcil de St. Jean Baptiste, in Canada. The letters do not appear to have any possible signification, but the case should be watched by physiologists, and treated in the same manner as that of Louise Lateau. Some curious events that the editor of the *Messager*, who has not apparently read the *procès*, thinks may be mediumistic have taken place in the diocese of Amiens. The bishop has addressed the following pastoral letter, that we textually translate:—

"Firstly, by a letter inserted in the *Semaine Réligieuse* of Amiens, we have thought it our duty to warn the clergy and faithful of our diocese about the strange facts that have been observed at Gouy l' hôpital.

"After authentic accounts that have been successively and faithfully given to us, we have been able to understand these pretended miracles, apparitions, and prophecies that have made the most holy Virgin play an unworthy and absurd part.

"But in all these vulgar rhapsodies, full of incoherencies and of contradictions, of theological errors and of flagrant imbecilities, with which also are mixed political passions, we are not able to recognise more than miserable juggling tricks, or insane hallucinations, if the two do not occur at the same time.

"We hope that the common sense of the public will do speedy justice. But, at times troubled like our own, the credulity of the simple and the love of the marvellous are too easily attached to everything that appears extraordinary, and speculators will not fail to profit by them. Already we see that many pamphlets on the wonders of Gouy l' hôpital have

been printed for the sole advantage of the bookshops and the publishers.

"We must again afresh warn those in our diocese against the exceedingly real evil which these insensate dreams may produce to religion, and note that impiety has made them consistent and responsible. We forbid the clergy and the faithful to take any part in the ridiculous assemblages and revelations at Gouy, and in all this illicit worship, that is equally condemned by the laws of God and those of man.

(Signed) "+AIME VICTOR FRANCIS,  
"Amiens, 20th May, 1881.      Bishop of Amiens."

If a similar bold bishop had acted in the diocese of Tournay, Christianity might have been spared the scandal of the proceedings at what has been called (by those who can laugh) the "comedy of Bois d' Haine." It can scarcely be said, after this, that (at least in the diocese of Amiens) "lying miracles" are encouraged.

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"HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

(May, 1881.)

The *Harbinger* is useful, as it tells us of the existence of another Spiritualistic monthly paper, published at Portland, Oregon. We also have a series of articles on the works of J. M. Peebles, "The Way Marks of a Pilgrim." We are told that Dr. Beard, the celebrated opponent of clairvoyance and Spiritualism, has lately altered his opinions with regard to the former. The lady medium who converted him is described as Mrs. Julia Carpenter, "wife of the famous psychologist." It is hardly necessary to say that this is not the wife of Dr. W. B. Carpenter late of the University of London. The Melbourne paper appears to be in direct communication with the authorities of the Buddhist schools, founded by the Theosophical Society in Ceylon, and to recognise with a willing pen the services of the Mahomedan religion in civilising the negroes of Africa to an appreciable extent by its rays of light, diffused through the medium of the intelligent Moslem missionaries on the West Coast. The Antipodes produces a very good newspaper, which reflects the knowledge of America and India, as well as Europe.

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"MIND AND MATTER."

This enters as usual into the vindication of mediums, and a very large portion of it is devoted to the justification of Mr. France, who appears to have drawn blank manifestations with Colonel Bundy. Whether Mr. France is or not a genuine medium, of course we are not prepared to say, but it may be

noted that he is said to have submitted in Colonel Bundy's own house, to such fraud-proof conditions as the ingenuity of the detectors could devise. Subsequently<sup>a</sup> a paragraph was published in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* stating that Mr. France was "a medium." A vehement attack on Mr. C. A. Simpson, who had described the result of three séances with Dr. Slade, follows. The point of Simpson's insinuation against Dr. Slade was that the slate was occasionally under the table, and it is suggested that it contained previously prepared writing. Such an accusation is of course met by the testimony of the numerous persons who allege that the slates they brought to Slade were perfectly clean and devoid of writing. *Mind and Matter* cannot answer Mr. Simpson, nor any one else, without devoting more space than is usual in these sort of prints to personal attacks. It appears that Col. Bundy is sick; also that he has a wife. Wherefore column after column of this paper are filled up with attacks upon persons of whom we may safely say that the world never before heard. A record is given of some manifestations through Mrs. Elsie Crindle, who does not sit in a dark cabinet, but behind a curtain. Sixteen various forms, all but one females, are said to have shown themselves in a full light. None of them bore any resemblance whatever to the medium, and most identified themselves by speaking their names, or the names of those for whom they came. The observer (whose name is not appended) says that he saw one of these materialised and speaking spirits pass to the medium, and in an instant disappear, as if absorbed in the medium's person. He was enabled to see this, by reason of the curtain being left sufficiently open by the retreating spirit, and the light behind the curtain being strong enough to see distinctly what took place. The idea of test-conditions seems to have been rather loosely entertained at a séance with Mr. Rothermel at Brooklyn, when certain handkerchiefs were tied round the thighs of the medium, "and then some strong tape sewed fast to the corners, and tied fast and tight around his wrists, and the upper ends sewed fast together." What is the good of such a test as this, unless it is definitely stated to what the tapes were sewn? *Mind and Matter* flies at high game. One of its articles tells us how "Apollonius of Tyana, the Jesus of Nazareth, St. Paul, and John the Revelator of the Christian Scriptures, return to earth as spirits, and explain the mysteries that have concealed the theological creed and deception of the Christian hierarchy." We cannot quite make out the identity of some of these individuals. We would rather take the first and note that the revelation of Apollonius

of Tyana does not quite agree with the common biographical dictionaries. Aristippus, the Greek philosopher, appears to address us in the purest Americanese; and Vespasian (who, we are informed, was the tenth Roman Emperor) gives a revelation that in the main is found to tally with the one in Josephus. After such company as this, Brunehild (Queen of the Visigoths, if there ever was such a person, and if her name could have been Brunehild) contribute their share of information. To persons who have seriously read of these persons this sort of communication is of very little value.

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"BANNER OF LIGHT."

The *Banner of Light* continues to exist in America. A large portion of its space is filled with medical theories, and with advertisements of a character that we do not see in all English prints. We, however, see in this paper an originality that it does not share with any other journal, and that few other journals would wish to share with it. One of the passages in the *Banner of Light's* leading article deserves notice. We are told (June 18th, 1881) "the German Philosopher, Fichte, who is also a Spiritualist, remarks that," etc. Here a confusion seems to have existed between Johann Gottlieb Fichte, the celebrated philosopher, born May 19th, 1762, who died on January 28th, 1814, and Immanuel Hermann Fichte, born 18th July, 1797, and who died 8th August, 1879. It was the elder who was the philosopher, and the younger who was the Spiritualist. They were father and son, yet the philosophy of both essentially differed. The editor, while admitting that I. H. Fichte was the son of the Fichte, yet speaks of him in the present tense, as if he were a living man. A large portion of the *Banner* is occupied by communications that are alleged to proceed from Spirits, and who give their names and last addresses. Some of these communications are identified by writers of letters (also appending their names and addresses) who declare that the persons named are real and not imaginary individuals. We may not be able to appreciate the inestimable value of this part of the *Banner* on the theory that the letters are genuine, and the most careful investigation may be necessary before the identity may be considered as proved. This feature in the *Banner of Light* has been progressing for many years, and the writers who manage to speak in the easily recognizable language of the deceased persons (in whom we observe a considerable variety of style) are at least entitled to the palm of assiduity and industry. The *Banner of Light* is however,

not free from the personalities that affect all American journals, and that appear to be more prominent in the Spiritualist ones than in ordinary literature. We would be glad to see a tone adopted in these newspapers less personal, and more in imitation of the newspapers that are issued in Germany, Belgium, and France. The English papers may be dull, but rarely are so vehement as the *Banner of Light* and its contemporaries.

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"PSYCHISCHE STUDIEN."

(July, 1881.)

This is occupied by a very careful epitome of the phenomena observed in the presence of Molly Fanchon, the fasting girl of Brooklyn, from the pen of Mr. J. C. E. West, and gives a number of physiological experiments with her, that may be of value. The account was originally published in the *Buffalo Courier* for 1878. Some new facts with regard to the magnetic hypnotic states are given by Dr. Plesnicar, who appears to have arrived at different results, or at least to have followed a different method to that of Baron Du Potet, whose recent death we may note. Dr. G. v. Langsdorff contributes a paper, "What can any one learn from mediums," wherein the questions of their knowledge, their accuracy, and their morality are discussed from a point of view that is alike temperate and liberal. Baron Von Hellenbach continues his experiences of Mr. W. Eglinton in Vienna. The proceedings of the Spirit Society in Buda Pesth are chronicled carefully by M. Adolf Grünhart. Herr Hugo Gottschalck gives a translation of one of Longfellow's poems on "Haunted Houses." Harry Bastian seems to be giving some mediumistic séances in Vienna, and the Baron Von Hellenbach contrasts him with Miss Espérance, whose flower manifestations have been often recorded. It is the conclusion of Baron Von Hellenbach that such phenomena are entirely beyond the limits of the *répertoire* of the professional conjuror, with whose performances they exhibit no analogy. A very good book by Professor W. Preyer on the history of Hypnotism, appears to have been published at Berlin, wherein the phenomena produced by the administration of anasthetics are contrasted with those observable in the hypnotic or braidic state. *Psychische Studien* always represents the higher tone of the German metaphysical mind, and the manner wherein the subject is considered may be advantageously imitated in England. It is a model psychological magazine, and well worthy of the high reputation of Professor Aksakof who is perhaps one of the most thoughtful spiritualists of the Continent.

## K A R M A.

BY CHARLES CARLETON MASSEY.

IN a book well known to many readers of this *Review*, there is a clear and concise exposition of the idea of moral sequence in contrast with popular Christian beliefs as to the nature of sin and the condition of man after physical dissolution.\* It is given to us by the author in a summary of spirit teaching, though we may be quite content to regard it as representing the advanced intelligence of Spiritualists. To the same effect is a passage in Mr. John Stuart Mill's essay on Theism, which is not too long to quote.

"Nothing can be more opposed to every estimate we can form of probability than the common idea of a future life as a state of rewards and punishments, in any other sense than that the consequences of our actions upon our own character and susceptibilities will follow us in the future as they have done in the past and present. Whatever be the probabilities of a future life, all the probabilities *in case* of a future life are that such as we have been made or have made ourselves before the change, such we shall enter into the life hereafter; and that the fact of death will make no sudden break in our spiritual life, nor influence our character any otherwise than as any important change in our mode of existence may always be expected to modify it."

The moral continuity here anticipated in connection with belief in a future life points almost necessarily to a succession of states with appropriate relations and surroundings analogous to those which constitute our world for us. We are here now, because the place suits us; and re-incarnationists may argue with some force that we shall continue to be here, in different personalities or embodiments, as long as it continues to suit us. The ancient, and in the East still universally diffused belief in transmigration rests entirely on the principle of moral causation. The re-births (which are not confined to this world) are directly caused by the moral state of the individual at physical dissolution. The modern Spiritualist of the school which rejects Re-incarnation minimises the effects of this event, and insists that the whole personality of the individual—all that made him the Smith or Jones of our acquaintance—remains exactly as it was before. Indian philosophy has a far more subtle conception of what constitutes identity,

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\* *Higher Aspects of Spiritualism.* By M. A. (Oxon.) E. W. Allen, London, 1881.

and in Buddhism it is reduced to such a metaphysical point that to most European interpreters it has seemed imperceptible. This metaphysical point is Karma.

Karma, literally, is "doing." The author referred to at the beginning of this article has described human character as "the imperceptible growth of a life-time, the laborious aggregation of myriads of daily acts."<sup>\*</sup> "All that we are," says the Buddhist Dhammapada, "is the result of what we have thought, it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts." For thoughts, imaginations, desires, are not in this philosophy merely subjective and evanescent phenomena of consciousness; they weave the subtle structure which determines the character in this life and originates it in the next. And however we may disclaim materialism, we have not emancipated ourselves from its intellectual defects till we can see in human thought an efficient cause, and recognise resulting states as not less real than the physical organism itself. Modern physiology indeed knows, or conjectures with extreme probability, that to every mental activity there is a corresponding modification of the brain. Upon this fact the distinguished scientific authors of "The Unseen Universe," dealing with the supposition of a spiritual body, found the following speculation:—

"Now each thought that we think is accompanied by certain molecular motions and displacements in the brain, and part of these, let us allow, may be stored up in that organ so as to produce what may be termed our material or physical memory. Other parts of these motions are, however, communicated to the spiritual or invisible body, and are there stored up, forming a memory which may be made use of when that body is free to exercise its functions."

Now, if the student of Buddhism were permitted to regard Karma as the formative principle, or the resultant state of such a spiritual or ethereal vehicle of transmigration, if indeed that system recognised soul at all as a specific individualised entity, there would be here no difficulty. In common with every other school of Spiritualism, ancient and modern, the older Indian philosophy of Kapila teaches the existence of a subtle body—called by it Linga Sarira—the receptacle and prison of the unemancipated soul at the dissolution of the gross body, or terrestrial envelope. And we might quote from "Cudworth's Intellectual System," and other sources, an array of venerable authorities whose consentient testimony is to the effect that this interior, fluidic body, which is liberated at the change we call death, has a density and durability inversely proportioned

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\* *Higher Aspects of Spiritualism*, p. 88.

to the spirituality of the past life. Has the man been gross and sensual? is he earth-bound by nature and desires?—then will the material properties of the fluidic body be the more predominant, so that under certain conditions it may be even perceptible by our ordinary sight—rarely by any other sense—and may haunt certain localities for centuries, making its presence occasionally known in the phenomena familiar to us by innumerable recitals. To more innocent lives, a corporeal vehicle of greater tenuity is appropriate; it can be elevated to another sphere of existence, or according to the modern reincarnationist, and older Indian transmigration schools, it can with the soul re-enter the earth-life, where in a new career it determines the connate propensities of the re-born individual. The most prevalent opinion is that the soul-body is etherealised in successive spheres of ascent. Nearly all the Platonists held the true spiritual body—the *augoeides*—to be specifically distinct from the semi-material vehicle of the soul, and not merely a sublimation of it. The latter, therefore, must be completely dissipated before the disengagement, the glorious freedom and ascent of the “self-shining one” could be effected. The fluidic body of the soul has always been regarded as expressing and conserving a material nature or disposition. Its greater or less etherealisation was according to the degree of spiritual purity which had been attained. In Buddhism, however, if we must implicitly trust translators and interpreters of the Pali texts, no such medium for transmigration is admitted, nor even any *atma* (soul) independent of the perishable Skandhas, or congeries of organised elements. Yet multiplicity of birth is asserted, each determined by the Karma of a previous life, and the supreme attraction of Nirvana is exemption from this cycle of existences. What, then, constitutes identity, what is the individual, what is Karma?

It is admitted on all sides in the Buddhist controversy that the apparently new personality is derivative from the Karma, that is, the organised quality, the nett physical result, the acquired nature, as it were, of a personality apparently extinct. What causes the birth of the individual thus specifically qualified by an old Karma is Upadana—“cleaving to existence.” But whose Upadana? If that of the old individual, he cannot properly be said to become extinct when he succeeds in transferring to a new consciousness just that which, apart from organism, is most decidedly himself. If, on the other hand, we must seek this Upadana in a deeper principle, one which is neither the old consciousness nor the new, but the formative agency in both by means of Karma, then we have a true *atma*, though subsisting indifferently in and through many

successive individual manifestations. Taking Mr. Rhy Davids\* (though he is by no means singular in his views) as the representative of the nihilistic school of interpreters, we have what he himself admits to be an incomprehensible mystery, and what others may call an utterly nonsensical one. According to this account, there is no individual identity whatever, but a wholly new being, characterised and conditioned by another life, a life not physically generative of its successor, and connected with it by no natural continuity, but by a perfectly arbitrary link, by a perfectly unexplained sequence. The difficulty apparently arises from the fact that in Buddhism, Karma, which is the only true differentia of individuality, has no substratum, like the linga s'arira, to carry it from one personal existence to another. The mind seeks something to grasp, something which is not purely ideal, when encountering questions of generation. It is certain that in the Skandhas we have an exhaustive catalogue of all which in union constitutes conscious existence, and the Skandhas are dispersed at death. Nevertheless there issues a new basis of conscious individuality : the conscious Jones or Smith is gone altogether. What, then, is left for the principle of individuality, for the energy of its revival as a new person ?

Are we near the solution if we suggest that the unsubstantial entity of Karma is *moral force*? True, we do not know *what* force is, but we know *that* it is—it is a *vera causa*; and it is unsubstantial. If we conceive individual character as a specific moral force, we shall see that the loss of every material medium of its manifestation could not result in its own dissipation or conversion. Only on the materialistic hypothesis that moral force is a mode of physical force could this happen. The generic moral force in Buddhism is Desire, i.e., Upadana, cleaving to existence, or Trishna, thirst. Karma is this force specialised as individual propensity or character. Karma is pure force divested of consciousness and every sort of embodiment. We are familiar with the conceptions of automatic tendency, organic habits. These are for the most part aptitudes for actions, originally voluntary, but by repetition become spontaneous. Character is said to be formed when the moral and intellectual propensities have acquired this sort of organic spontaneity. If we consider these associated tendencies as independent of consciousness for their unity, and of an external organism for their subsistence, we have the idea of Karma as the formative force of a new sentient being. The formed

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\* *Buddhism.* By T. W. Rhy Davids. London : Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. 1880.

character of the old individual organises itself as natural character in the new individual—if, indeed, they are two and not the same. We may also designate the individual character thus perpetuated by Swedenborg's favourite phrase, the Ruling Love, which he describes as the essence of the will. The student of Böhme will not fail to notice the derivation from the more abstract and indeterminate Desire (*Trishna, thirst*, and *Upadana*, cleaving, attraction, etc.) through Karma, Will, the totality of individualised, specific, desire or propensity, into sentience and substantiality.

Does Karma satisfy the demand for individual permanence through all the changes of embodied personality? *Conscious* identity is certainly abandoned in this as in all transmigration or re-incarnation systems, at least until such a state is attained that the true being can review its successive personalities as so many illusions, which have hitherto obscured its right self-consciousness. In Karma, the transmissible Karma, we have what we *are*,—the nett result—stripped of the illusion of personality. We have evolved a moral force, which for all reproductive purposes is ourselves. But in Indian philosophy—for Buddhism, as a derivative system, accepts from older sources all that it does not obviously disclaim—Soul is one and unchangeable. Personality is not its manifestation but its disguise. If we seek its supreme and still identity in the agitations of our apparent self, we shall not find it, and it will not save us. It is not soul which makes us say "I" and "mine." To the converted, says Gautama, these terms do not occur. "Neither I am, nor is aught mine, nor do I exist," says Kapila. Say all these sages, would you know true Being in its impersonal independence of time and objective relations? Then must you cease from craving for what is manifested in time and is dispersed by time, above all for a Self immersed in time. Identify yourself with Being. Disclaim your temporal personality. Say to its desires and passions, Ye are not of me. Persevere thus, dissipating the illusion by meditation, by incessant self-restraint. By and by, the heretofore cherished personality will shrink and wither away before your eyes. And if you succeed in eradicating Desire—the attraction which carries you out of Being and objectifies you as a "person," you will arrest the production of Karma, and with the dissolution of your present organism you will escape from apparent existence altogether. That is through "Moksha"—deliverance from bonds—to attain Nirvana, the impersonal immortality.

If we can see in individual character, surviving and transmitted, an essential identity, it is also apparent how this can

receive a new possibility of solution and conversion by re-embodiment. When a man dies, he is what he has made himself. His character has become fixed and hardened. Only by effort or assistance almost superhuman, and rarely experienced after maturity is past, can he solve and disintegrate this active, conscious nature, reforming it into a higher moral type. He has got into a fatalistic stage. And what is the medium of this fatality? The physical memory. The indulged desires and propensities have transcended their original character as spontaneous impulse. Raised by the imagination to the voluntary rank, the simple tendencies of nature have been adopted, elaborated, and confirmed as habit by the will. "The spontaneous life," says Dr. Caird,\* "dies the moment I begin to *think* it. Confronted with self-consciousness, the natural tendencies lose their simplicity and innocence. If they continue still to dominate my nature, they assume the new and more complex character of conscious self-indulgence. They draw down into them, so to speak, a kind of illegitimate universality, and in the strife with reason become armed with a force stolen from the power with which they are at war." But the man dies, and if reborn, it is without the old physical memory, without therefore the ready-made imagination and conscious will to evil. The propensities are, it is true, indefinitely strengthened, but they have sunk back from the voluntary into the spontaneous stage. Reason is freed from their bondage and may reassert its mastery. Actual sin has returned to the latent condition of original sin. The man is a child again, restored to the potentialities of conquest. If not a new soul, he has at least one which is renewed, cleansed from the actual will to defilement. In this respect there is a clear gain in conceiving death as a break in the continuity of consciousness.

The indestructibility of moral force is thus the characteristic idea of Karma. Moral force, good or evil, or good and evil in association, specialised as character, is transmitted from one embodiment to another, and is the individuality of both. But while that exhausts the conception of individuality, it does not comprise the whole being of the individual. *For his individuality is not his being.* To say I have, or am, an immortal soul is Avidya—ignorance. Soul, though in all and above all, is individualised in none. It makes its presence known to us, and it is what, while under the illusion of personality, we mistake for an imperishable principle of the latter. To appro-

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\* *Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 270 et seq. The pages in which this idea is drawn out are of surpassing subtlety and power.

priate soul to personality is in Buddhism a capital heresy. To lose personality in soul is its central teaching.

But the persistence of moral force as character is a very inadequate representation of the conception of Karma. It is as merit and demerit establishing moral justice in the world by their own mere self-acting efficacy, that Karma is most popularly conceived. It is exhibited as a strictly causative principle, redeeming even external nature in its relation to sentient beings, from its apparent lifelessness and immorality. Action has a mysterious vitality, and lives in its results. Karma, says the Buddhist, must work itself out, not because of any arbitrary irreversible decree, but because good or evil in action, word, or thought is seed which must ripen sooner or later as surely as the world supplies conditions of germination. "Even an evil-doer sees happiness as long as his evil deed has not ripened; but when his evil deed has ripened, then the evil-doer sees evil." "Even a good man sees evil days as long as his good deed has not ripened; but when his good deed has ripened, then does the good man see happy days."—*Dhammapada*.

Man's lot in life is not, according to this belief, the result either of chance, or of external necessity, or of divine justice appointing punishment and reward. Between ourselves and our fortune or circumstances there is no accidental relation. I have myself, in this life or in a former one, put forth into the world a seed of good or evil. During all the time of its growth, unknown to me it has yet belonged to me. At its maturity it comes home to me (as curses are said to come home to roost) in beneficent or malignant reaction. No deed is ever lost; it has the life of its purpose, the personality of its doer. For this fatal power of action over the doer is not merely external. The seed sown has its counterpart in the sower, as latent modification of his own state. Between the physical outbirth and the moral deposit there is magnetic attraction. Thus the physical evil of the world is drawn to the moral evil of the man who originated it. True it is we cannot trace the causation as determined sequence in particulars without recourse to an extrinsic will or law; a divine retributive appointment which Buddhism does not recognise. We cannot trace it: but it would be rash to assume that the infinitely subtle mechanism of moral order does not comprehend relations which seem most external to it. The moral government of the world thus figured in the effects of Karma represents an equivalence or correspondence between the sum of physical and moral good or evil. Strange paradox! It is an assault upon the stronghold of Pessimism by a system

which regards existence itself—that is, objective existence (Ex-istence, being gone out of itself)—as the greatest and the whole of evil. The blind and irresponsible forces of nature, the merciless “environment” which knows no merit but “adaptation,” are converted into moral agencies, holding the scales of justice with unerring hands. The innocent never suffer! Man only can do wrong. And even he can do injustice only in intention. It is the unpunished robber of a previous existence that he robs, or as unjust judge condemns for a robbery not done. A new evil Karma is started, but an old one is discharged. And a Karma is sometimes so long in ripening, that a being who is enjoying the matured fruit of great merit in one of the heavens may be eventually drawn down to earth again by the invincible attraction of an old unpaid account. For the Buddhist heavens (of which there are many, the higher ones being states of unembodied consciousness) are not places or conditions of final beatitude and repose. That condition can be reached only by complete eradication of desire, when Ignorance (*Avidya*) ceases, and with it the illusion of individuality.

Such a scheme of natural retribution, unverified and unverifiable, will be regarded as belonging only to the class of hypothetical curiosities. Given the fact of transmigration, and it is easy enough to imagine correspondence between merit and requital. As Mr. Rhys Davids observes, “The explanation can always be exact, for it is scarcely more than a repetition of the point to be explained; it may always fit the facts, for it is derived from them; and it cannot be disproved, for it lies in a sphere beyond the reach of human inquiry.”\* Nevertheless, when this is admitted, we are free to admire the conception as an ingenious attempt to assert for justice a strictly scientific validity; for it must be remembered that Buddhism recognises no Providential government. Nor is transmigration for the sake of retribution. It is Karma as attractive desire organised in the individual, not as merit or demerit, that causes re-birth; and that determines the character and propensities of the re-born or derivative individual, but not his external fortune in life. It is the fruitage of actions, a mysterious maturity they acquire after projection into the outer world, that according to a still more mysterious order comes back to their author as retribution. To what speciality of thought, in a non-Providential system, does this conception belong? If to the mere tendency of the mind to say “this is so, because it ought to be,” we might dismiss it as a moral

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\* *Buddhism*, p. 100.

fiction, and, in Buddhism, one especially illogical. On the other hand, we cannot deny its possible derivation from a subtle conception of causality, tracing actions to their most remote results, marking their transformations through all the phases of physical and moral good and evil in the world, and identifying them in their ultimates with their author. To a yet higher discernment might belong the discovery of a subsisting relation between the personal cause and the effect, and of a reactive tendency in the latter. Nor are we without a vague, yet suggestive, clue in the semi-personal agencies which Occultism so boldly avers. To quote from a book which has recently attracted some attention, "We see a vast difference," says one of an Adept fraternity in India, writing to the author, "between the two qualities of two equal amounts of energy expended by two men, of whom one, let us suppose, is on his way to his daily quiet work, and another on his way to denounce a fellow-creature at the police-station, while the men of science see none; and we, not they, see a specific difference between the energy in the motion of the wind and that of a revolving wheel. And why? Because every thought of man upon being evolved passes into the inner world, and becomes an active energy by associating itself, coalescing we might term it, with an elemental—that is to say, with one of the semi-intelligent forces of the kingdoms. It survives as an active intelligence—a creature of the mind's begetting—for a longer or shorter period proportionate with the original intensity of the cerebral action that generated it. Thus a good thought is perpetuated as an active, beneficent power, an evil one as a maleficent demon."\* If that is the case with thought, how must it be with thought ultimated in action?

Whether it originates in profound discernment or extravagant fancy, the belief in retributive Karma is a moral influence of acknowledged power. Of all the doctrines of Buddhism it is, says Mr. Rhys Davids, "the one which has been most universally accepted, and has had the greatest practical effect on the lives of its believers." Nor, indeed, can the moral importance of such a conception be easily overrated. If, for example, every angry thought or impulse was followed by the sudden apparition of a viper on the ground before us, all our passions, cupidities, and vanities being similarly embodied in corresponding visible forms, we should thus obtain a sensuous representation of moral causation, yet one not comparable for restraining efficacy to a thorough belief in Karma. To our toads and scorpions we should soon get accustomed. With

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\* *The Occult World.* By A. P. Sinnett. Trübner, 1881, p. 181.

the conception of an organic process, fatally determinative, in and beyond ourselves, the case is very different. And between this conception, explicable as a cause not less certain in its operation than chemical or mechanical agencies, and current notions of moral responsibility as amenability to justice largely tempered with mercy, there is an interval hardly measurable in regard to practical influence. The comparison need not be pursued; but we may conclude as we began, by calling attention to progressive ideas in our own country, whereby many have come to recognise in moral causation the sole and inexorable determinant of individual states hereafter.

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## SPIRITUALISM AMONGST SAVAGE TRIBES.

### INTERCOURSE WITH SPIRITS AND MAGIC AMONGST THE KURNAI OF AUSTRALIA.

"No armour protects against magic, for it injures the inward spirit of Life."—*Paracelsus*.

*"The savage is to ages what the child is to years,"* was observed by Shelley in the beginning of the century. Towards its close—when the savage races, wheresoever the white man has planted the feet of his civilisation, are dwindling into faint shadows of their former being—Science, become cognisant, in her turn, of what Poetry—ever prophetic—had been the first to recognise, has with enthusiasm and zeal begun to gather together as facts of deep importance, all that concerns this child of the ages. It has occurred to the man of science, that possibly through the study of the traditions, the customs, the modes of thought of the savage, a light may be obtained whereby to illumine the hitherto impenetrable and dark mystery of the early condition of the human races and the origin of civilisation—that possibly, by the light thus obtained, humanity, so to speak, may yet be beheld amongst us, cradled in its very earliest condition of being.

An important contribution to the sciences of Ethnology and Anthropology has been made in a work published by Messrs. Macmillan and written by the Rev. Lorimer Fison, M.A., and Mr. Alfred W. Howitt, F.G.S. It is entitled "Kamelaroi and Kurnai," and is prefaced by an introductory essay from the pen of the learned author of "Ancient Society," Dr. Lewis H. Morgan. The main object in this curious work is to demonstrate the existence of singular laws of marriage and descent amongst the aborigines of the Australian continent, the existence of which leads to important conclusions and throws new light upon the probable social condition of mankind in primeval times.

It is not, however, to the portions of the work devoted to the consideration of the marriage-laws that we would here draw the attention of the readers of the *Psychological Review*, but to certain valuable information regarding the practice of magic, and the existence of customs and ceremonies based upon intercourse with the world of Spirits, as discovered still in force—or just expiring—amongst the Kurnai, the tribe of aborigines inhabiting Gippsland.

Mr. Alfred Howitt, son of William and Mary Howitt, may be remembered perhaps by some of our readers as having, in 1859, been the successful leader of the expedition sent out by the Royal Society of Victoria in search of the missing explorers Burke and Wills. He was engaged also in other arduous explorations in Australia, and has for some years been a police magistrate in North Gippsland. He thus has enjoyed exceptional opportunities for the study of savage-life. His essays on the "Kurnai" in the present volume are the result of many years' labour in the careful noting down of facts which he has himself witnessed, and of conversations which he has held with the natives. Especially from a native named Tulaba did Mr. Howitt obtain valuable information regarding the ancient customs of the tribe—some facts dying out and which, handed down through the elders of both sexes, collectively formed an "unwritten law" of great force.

The narrative commences with the birth and education of the young Kurnai, and conducting him through his varied experiences to the grave—everywhere do we catch glimpses of belief in the surrounding influences of the Spirit-world. "Kurnai," be it observed, signifies "men," men *par excellence*; other tribes to him are "wild men," "barbarians" in short. To this Kurnai-man (as indeed the Spiritualist believes to *all men*) the spirits of his ancestors, his enemies, are ever near at hand, for blessing or for ban. It is when we arrive at the section treating of the customs attendant on the burial of the dead that we come to the most salient facts of his belief in spirit-intercourse.

What Spiritualist, having made use of the modern European inventions of the "Planchette" and the "Indicator," although he probably may have read of the basket *Planchette* of the Chinese which writes its spirit-given message in a plane of rice-grains or of sand, will have surmised its weird kinship at the antipodes with

#### THE SPEAKING HAND.

"The most remarkable custom in connection with the dead was that of the 'Brett,' or hand. Soon after death the hand or both the hands were cut off, wrapped in grass and dried.

A string of twisted opossum hair was attached, so that it could be hung round the neck and worn in contact with the bare skin under the left arm. It was carried by the parent or child, brother or sister. The belief of the Kurnai was, and even, I think, still in many cases is, that such a hand on the approach of an enemy would pinch or push the wearer. The signal being given, the hand would be taken from the neck and suspended in front of the face, the string being held between the fingers and thumb. The person would say—‘Which way are they coming?’ If the hand remained at rest, the question would be again put, but now facing another point of the horizon, and so on. The response was by the hand vibrating in some direction, and it was thence that the danger was supposed to be approaching. My informants tell me that the vibrations were often so violent that the hand would almost ‘come over on to the holder.’” In a note Mr. Howitt tells us that in one case of addressing the hand the formula used was—“Speak! Where are they? or I will throw you to the wild dogs!”

Here is the Kurnai’s experience with

#### MRARTS, OR GHOSTS.

“The deceased was supposed by the Kurnai to pass to the clouds as a spirit. But he did not necessarily remain there, for male and female spirits are also believed to wander about in the country which they inhabited in the flesh, and may be properly spoken of as ghosts. They are believed to be able still to communicate with the living, through persons whom they have initiated into the secrets of spirit-land: of these people called *Birraarks* I shall speak more fully later. They are also believed to occasionally communicate with their descendants in dreams. These ‘ghosts’ may be said to be the ancestors of those with whom they communicate, and to be, therefore, well disposed to them; but there are others, ‘ghosts’ which are believed to be evil-disposed, which are thought to prowl about, and to endeavour to capture the Kurnai, and we may well regard those as representing the deceased enemies who in the flesh also prowled about intent on evil.”

The ancestral ghosts of these aborigines await with evident interest and affection the arrival of friends from earth, in much the same manner as we have reason to believe the spirits of the more civilised races are in the habit of doing—witness the following narrative:—

“Mr. C. J. Du Vè, a gentleman of much experience with the aborigines, tells me,” writes the author, “that in the year 1860, a Maneroo black-fellow died. When living with him the day

before he died, having been ill some time, he said that in the night, his father, his father's friend, and a female spirit he could not recognise, had come to him, and said he would die next day, and that they would wait for him. Mr. Du Vé adds that, although previously the Christian belief had been explained to this man, it had at that time entirely faded, and that he had gone back to the belief of his childhood." In a note Mr. Fison remarks—"I could give many similar instances which have come within my own knowledge among the Fijians; and strange to say, the dying man in all these cases kept his appointment with the ghosts to the very day."

As an instance of the extraordinary physical powers possessed by "Mrarts" or ghosts, Mr. Howitt relates as follows:—"A Tatüngolüng man related to me that, when a child, sleeping in the camp with his parents, he was woken by the outcries of his father, and, starting up, found him partly out of the camp on his back kicking, while his wife clutched him fast by the shoulders and the 'Marat' vanished."

"These ghosts appear to visit their friends during sleep and communicate charms (in the form of songs) against sickness and other evils." Tülahä stated that if he could remember all his father teaches him in sleep, he should be a *mulla mullung*, or doctor. One charm which he has thus learned, and which the author had heard him use to cure pain in the chest, by singing monotonously over the sick person—translated runs thus—"I believe *Brewin* (evil-spirit) has hooked me with the eye of his throwing-stick." (The throwing-stick is supposed to have magical properties.)

"A Kurnai man told me," pursues the author, "that when gathering wild cattle for a settler near the Mitchell River, he dreamed one night that two 'Mrarts' (ghosts) were standing by his fire. They were about to speak to him, or he to them, when he woke. They had vanished, but on looking at the spot where they stood he perceived a 'BULK' which he kept and valued much." The 'BULK' seems to play an important part in the magic ceremonies of this tribe. We are told that "there is scarcely a Kurnai of those who are not christianised who does not carry about with him a 'bulk'—a rounded pebble, generally black. It is believed that a 'bulk' has the power of motion. It is supposed to be of general magic powers. The touch of it is supposed to be highly injurious to any one but the owner. "I have seen girls or women greatly terrified," says Mr. Howitt, "when I have offered to place one of these 'bulks' in their hands. From all this we may infer," he continues, "the belief to be that some secret influence passes from the magic substance to the victims. But the

belief extends beyond this: the magic influence may, they suppose, be communicated from the magic substance to some other substance, for instance, a throwing-stick, a spear, a club, or any other weapon. Charley Rivers, a Tatungolung, once explained to me how he got a wound on his hand which would not heal, and how he was cured of it. Some Melbourne black-fellow had put some substance like 'bulk' in a bag containing a club of Charley Rivers. Being drunk the latter wanted to chastise his wife, but in flourishing his club hit his own hand and cut it open. The magic from the Brajerak bulk had gone into the club, and thence went into anything it hit. His wound became so bad that the English doctors could not cure it. One of the Kurnai, who was a very strong *mulla mullung*, cured it by singing over it and sucking it. He extracted the bulk from the wound in the shape of something which looked exactly like a glass marble."

"Rheumatism is believed to be produced by the machination of some enemy. Seeing a Tatungolung very lame, I asked him what was the matter. He said—'some fellow have put *bottle* in my foot.' I asked him to let me see it. I found he was probably suffering from acute rheumatism. He explained that some enemy must have found his foot-track, and have buried in it a piece of broken bottle. The magic influence, he believed, caused it to enter his foot. When at Cooper's Creek in search of Burke's party, we were followed one day by a large number of black-fellows, who were much interested in looking at and measuring the footprints of the horses and camels. My black boy, from the Darling River, rode up to me, with utmost alarm exhibited in his face, and exclaimed, 'Look at those wild black-fellows!' I said, 'Well, they are all right!' He replied, 'I am sure those fellows are putting poison in my footprint.' Thus the belief arises that death occurs only from accident, open violence, or secret magic; and naturally that the latter can only be met by counter charms."

Regarding these counter charms Mr. Howitt has much to tell us that is highly interesting—

"But of all the magic formula whereby to destroy an enemy, the most of all to be dreaded is

#### BARN (OR SORCERY).

"Not only, therefore, is death in some cases attributed to the acts of a sorcerer,—who may be any man they meet—but death is also believed to occur by a combination of sorcery and violence. Such a proceeding is that known as *Barn* (named from the tree the *casuarina suberosa*, locally called the He-oak).

"Some three or four years ago, some Brabrolung Kurnai had a grudge against Bündä-wal, a Tatungolung. They determined to try *barn*. They chose a tall He-oak, lopped it to a point, drew the outline of a man (*yamboginni*—apparition) on the ground, so that the tree grew out of his chest, cleared the ground of all rubbish for some distance round,—a sort of magic circle—and were then ready. They stripped, smeared themselves with charcoal and grease, and chanted incessantly a magic charm. This went on for several days, as I am informed, but without effect. They at last decided that they 'were not strong enough.' The effect which they expected was that the victim, wherever he might be, should rise and walk to them in a trance—'like a sleep.' On entering the magic circle, the *Bunjil barn* are supposed to throw pieces of the He-oak at him. He is believed then to fall, and the magicians are supposed to cut out his tongue and send him home to die. Brüthen Munji, the 'other father' of Tūlaba, is said to have been the last victim recorded of this form of magic. Tūlaba has repeated to me his counter charm, but I cannot remember if he obtained it in a dream. There can be little doubt—given the belief in the magic powers of the individual, and in his survival as a '*ghost*'—another belief would follow: namely, that those of the deceased who in life were possessed of highly magical powers, might, as ghosts, exert their evil influence upon their enemies."

#### BIRRAARKS, OR SPIRIT MEDIUMS.

"Unfortunately," says Mr. Howitt, "the last Birraark died long before I knew the Kurnai. He was killed in the early contests with the whites. The Kurnai tell me a Birraark was supposed to be initiated by the '*Mrarts*' (ghosts) when they met him wandering in the bush. In order that they should have power over him, he must at the time have a certain bone ornament called *gumbert*, thin and pointed at each end, passed through the perforated septum of his nose. By this they were supposed to hold and convey him to the clouds—some say by a rope—and there initiate him. On returning to the earth he was a Birraark. It was believed that he learned from the ghosts the songs and dances which he taught the Kurnai; and it was from the ghosts that he obtained replies to questions concerning events passing at a distance, or yet to happen, which might be of interest or of moment to his tribe. One of the Tatungolung told me that he had been present at an invocation of the ghosts, which bears a strange resemblance to a modern spirit séance.

On a certain evening at dusk the Birraark commenced his

invocation. The audience were collected, and silence was kept. The fires were let go down. The Birraark uttered the cry 'Coo-ee' at intervals. At length a distant reply was heard, and shortly afterwards the sound as of persons jumping on the ground in succession. This was supposed to be the spirit Bankan, followed by the ghosts. A voice was then heard in the gloom, asking, in a strange intonation, 'What is wanted?' Questions were put by the *Birraarks*, and replies given. At the termination of the *séance*, the spirit voice said, 'We are going.' Finally, the Birraark was found on the top of an almost inaccessible tree, apparently asleep. It was alleged that the ghosts had transported him there at their departure. At this *séance* the questions put related to individuals of the group who were absent, and to the suspected movements of the hostile Branjereak. It appears that there was a Birraark to each clan; more rarely one to a division. The stories told of these men all agree."

In a note to page 253 we are informed also by the Rev. J. H. Stahle that amongst the *Gournditch-mara* of Western Victoria there are the precise analogues of the *Birraarks*. Also that the Rev. Julius Kühn, of Boorkooyanna, S.A., speaking of the Turra tribe, says:—"There were Gürildris; men who professed to learn corroboree songs and dances from departed spirits. They also professed to learn songs for the dead, which were sung to make happy the departed who were gone to another country to live for ever, but to return no more."

In the mind of the student of Psychology who studies the life of the poor Kurnai,—living his "life of dread through fear of the visible and invisible" from his earliest hour to his last—there cannot fail to arise, amongst many others, one thought pre-eminently, which has been well expressed by Mrs. E. B. Penny. This lady says:—"As to the openness of ignorant or savage people to the supersensual impressions, it has always appeared to me one of the strongest proofs of the mediumistic nature of man. So long as the mind is not fully engaged with a multiplicity of mundane excitements, people on the other side of the veil can easily reach it; but surely we are as little likely to hear the monition of a Spirit in the hurry of modern mental life, as the whisper of a friend in a densely crowded street."

**THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND "MIRACLES."**—If, as is asserted, the "miracles" were the chief supports of Christianity in its early days, it is equally certain that they are now its main difficulty, and the primary cause of the dilemma in which the Church finds itself with relation to Modern Science.—JOHN S. FARMER.

## M. RENAN, F. W. H. MYERS, AND THE MIRACULOUS.

THE *Nineteenth Century* for July contains an article by F. W. H. Myers, entitled "M. Renan and Miracles." In the first few pages the writer gives his view of the position which he conceives M. Renan is entitled to take as a historian, and then proceeds to a topic which he describes as "difficult to discuss briefly, but which cannot be passed over in silence in any serious attempt to estimate the value of M. Renan's work"—namely, "his treatment of the miraculous element in the Gospel history."

Mr. Myers points out that Renan's theory is contained in the single frank assumption "that when a story is told which includes the miraculous or the supernatural, we simply know that it is told incorrectly," and shows what an advantageous position is thus given to the sceptical historian.

Mr. Myers' line of argument in reply is elaborately worked out in the article in question. He wisely endeavours to meet it, not by controverting individual points, but by "such a careful definition of the disputed field as may reduce the conflict between science and orthodoxy from the shape which it too often assumes, of a sheer and barren contradiction, to some form in which an ultimate reconciliation may be at least conceivable." After saying, "Let us reject all *question-begging* terms—all phrases such as 'violation of the order of Nature,' or 'direct interposition of the Deity'"—the writer goes on—"let us not oppose *law* and *miracle*, for whatever abnormal phenomena have occurred, must have occurred consistently with eternal law. Let us not oppose the *natural* and the *supernatural*; for God does nothing against nature, and all that these two terms can mean is, what we expect to see in nature, and what we do not expect to see."

A comparison is then drawn between the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches on the one side, and Science on the other. Mr. Myers proceeds:—"There are transient circumstances in the position of science which dispose her at present to push to an unphilosophical extent her aversion to such forms of inquiry (*i.e.*, of abnormal phenomena). Her reluctance is natural; for the subject is beset with difficulties of a baffling and distasteful kind. The observer, like Franklin waiting for his thunderstorms, must catch his abnormal phenomena when and where he can. . . . He must often depend on accounts of witnesses who are wholly unaccustomed to observe, or who are accustomed to observe in precisely the wrong way. Like the registrar of hysterical cases, he will have to extract his history of symptoms from persons whose

whole energies are devoted to deceiving him. He will be tempted to pronounce Simon Magus the only wonder-worker who has left successes, and to retire in disgust from the task of discriminating between the shades of fraud, and systematising the stages of folly."

Speaking of the doctrine of the fixity of natural laws, Mr. Myers says :—“ ‘Phenomena of this (the abnormal) kind,’ it is sometimes said, ‘need not now be disproved, for they are disbelieved without formal disproof.’ Precisely so. They are disbelieved because they are traditionally supposed to be violations of natural law, and we know now that natural laws are never violated. But this argument has a flaw in it: for until such phenomena are not only disbelieved, but weighed and sifted, we cannot tell whether they are violations of natural law or not.”

Further on we come to the following exceedingly pertinent paragraph :—

“Can it be said,—or rather *would* it be said—if no polemical passion were involved, that the widely-spread accounts of apparitions seen at the moment of death, or soon after death, have been collected and scrutinised as they would have been had the testimony related to any other class of facts? Notoriously they have not been so collected and so weighed. And the reason for this is, perhaps, to be sought in a want, rather than excess of confidence felt by men of science in the strength of their own central position—the immutable regularity of the course of Nature. They have shunned all mention of such phenomena, from a vague fear that if they were established, the spiritual world would be found intruding in the material world; that, as they have sometimes naively expressed it, ‘an incalculable element would be introduced which would interfere with the certainty of all experiments.’ The scientific answer to this, of course, is that whatever worlds, whatever phenomena exist, are governed by rigid law, and that all elements in all problems are incalculable only till they are calculated. The true disciple of science should desire to bring all regions, however strange and remote, under her sway. They may be productive in ways which he can little imagine. Some of the outlying facts, whose production Aristotle tranquilly ascribed to ‘chance and spontaneity,’ have proved the corner-stones of later discovery. And the *bizarre* but obstinately recurring phenomena which thus far have been inadequately attested and incompletely disproved—which have been left as the nucleus of legend and the nidus of *charlatanerie*—may in their turn form the starting point for wider generalisations for unexpected confirmations of universal law.”

We fully agree with F. W. H. Myers both that the common-sense of mankind will insist on feeling that the marvels of the New Testament history have as yet neither been explained away nor explained, and also "that it will assuredly refuse to concur with the view, often expressed both in scientific and theologic camps, according to which these marvels are after all unimportant; the spiritual context of the Gospels is everything, and religion and science alike may be glad to get rid of the miracles as soon as possible." After speaking of the blessings which Christianity has brought, the writer goes on:—"It is true, moreover, that the best men of all schools of thought are ever uniting more closely in the resolve to be practically Christian; to look on the labouring universe with this high affiance; to shape life after this pattern of self-sacrificing love, whatever the universe and life may really be—though the universe be a lonely waste of ether and atoms, and life a momentary consciousness which perishes with the brain's decay. So far will philosophy carry good and wise men. But even the best and the wisest men would prefer to rest their practical philosophy upon a basis of ascertained facts. And for the 'hard-headed artizan,' 'the sceptical inquirer,' the myriads of stubborn ones to which Christianity has a message to bring—for such men facts are everything, and philosophy without facts is a sentimental dream. They will never cease to desire actual evidence of another world which may develop the faculties, prolong the affections, redress the injustices of this. And they will feel more and more strongly, as the scientific spirit spreads, that such evidence cannot come to us conclusively either through lofty ideas generated within our own minds, or through traditions which reach us faintly through an ever-receding Past. Science rests not on intuition nor on tradition, but on patiently accumulated observations which on a sudden flash into a law."

In this paragraph Mr. Myers indicates the position which we desire to see Spiritualism take up in relation to the needs of the present day. It has been truly said that "there is but one religion in the world." The religion of "wise and good men," whether they be found in Hindooism, Judaism, or among the "Christian Mystics"; whether they be Catholic or Protestant, or whether they be outside all so-called Churches, is essentially the same. The same spirit of "self-sacrificing love" animates them all, and their faith in the realities of the unseen world is strong and unwavering. But the Gospel,—that is, the message of glad tidings—when preached to the world at large, needs to be accompanied with signs, and with teaching of a different character. The intellectual tendency

of the present day is fast destroying what remains of simple faith in the traditions of the past, and ridicules the idea of intuitive knowledge; believing only in what it calls the evidences of the senses. Spiritualism steps in, meeting science on its own ground, and restoring to mankind those glorious truths, faith in which was threatened with destruction.

Mr. Myers seems to us to treat, in a most admirable manner, in the latter part of his article, of the methods by which, and the spirit in which knowledge has been attained in the physical kingdom; and he contends that the analogy is applicable to the spiritual world. "The chemist begins with the production of foetid gases, and not of gold. The physiologist must deal with bone and cartilage before he gets to nerve and brain."

"Science, while perpetually denying an unseen world, is perpetually revealing it. Meantime we are unavoidably subject to the same illusion as our fathers. We too fancy that a great gulf surrounds our field of vision; that there must be void or mystery where we cease to see."

This is well said,—and so is the following:—

"If, then (apart from the inspirations of the individual soul), we are asked in what manner can we hope to obtain definite knowledge about spiritual things, the answer we shall be forced to give will seem, like the prophet's saying, *Wash in Jordan and be clean*, at once a disappointing platitude and a wild chimera. For we can reply only: In the same way as we have obtained definite knowledge about physical things. The things which we now call sensible or natural we have learnt by following scientific methods up to a certain point. The things which we call supra-sensible or supernatural, we shall learn by following these methods further still. But while we thus commit ourselves to science with loyal confidence, we shall call on her to assume the tone of an unquestioned monarch, rather than of a successful usurper. All phenomena are her undoubted subjects; let her press all into her service, and not ignore or proscribe any because ignorance may have misrepresented them, or theology misused. . . . But this has yet to be."

The value of such an article as this, in the pages of one of the leading monthly periodicals, will be very great, as indicating the point of view from which abnormal phenomena should be regarded both by the religious and scientific world; and it is of special interest to us who recognise in the phenomena of modern Spiritualism facts analogous to occurrences which have been repeated in all ages of the world, and which are, in our estimation, of invaluable importance in regard to the future extension of human knowledge. EDWARD T. BENNETT.

## GLEANINGS FROM AMONGST SAVAGE AND SEMI-BARBAROUS NATIONS,

WITH SUGGESTIONS AS TO A PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN SACRIFICE.

IT has been observed by Spiritualists, that once convinced of the existence of a Spiritual-world, and yourself become conversant with the phenomena of spirit-manifestations, a key of a new knowledge—a master-key—is possessed by you with which you can unlock a thousand long closed gates of mystery. Ancient popular beliefs and so-called superstitions amongst savage and semi-barbarous nations yield at once to this key—open their dreadful portals and reveal strange and wonderful labyrinthine paths amidst which the intellect may wander, gathering food—not always bitter—on every side. Even the revolting, and, at first sight, apparently irrational custom of human sacrifice—universal under many shapes in the ages of the past, and even in the present, existent to an almost incredible degree amongst savage and semi-barbarous peoples, yields up the underlying principle of its terrible mystery, and assumes a certain aspect of rationality,—as regarded from the stand-point of the savage,—and having around it even a certain brightness from the Spirit-world.

The following extracts are from "The Story of the Ashantee Campagne," by the late Winwood Reade.

Mr. Winwood Reade was the *Times* correspondent, and also author of a powerfully written book entitled "The Martyrdom of Man," the end and aim of which work was, to prove that man can alone hope for immortality *in the race*, but not *in the individual*. It is singular, therefore, to find this author, avowedly sceptical of the spirit side of life, writing as follows:—

"It is usually supposed that the signs and portents which ancient writers record as having preceded the ruin of a kingdom, a city, or a man, have been either entirely fictitious, or were only called to mind after the event. In the case of Coomassie, however, various prophecies and omens were current with the natives, and were even mentioned by correspondents in the papers before Coomassie was taken, and at a time when no one supposed that it would be destroyed.

"For instance, as early as October, I was told this legend whilst visiting Elmina. There was in Coomassie a famous doctor of the Moslems; he wrote certain words upon paper, sewed them up in leather cases, and sold them as charms against wounds in the war. The king called him, and said he wished to know the future of Coomassie. The priest made

inquiries, and replied that the fall of Elmina would be also the fall of Coomassie. The king, who did not expect such an answer, went to an old Ashantee sorceress. But she, having consulted the gods of the country, delivered the same oracle—‘The fall of Elmina would be the fall of Coomassie.’ ‘Well,’ said the king, ‘what does it matter; Elmina has been from the creation of the world, and so has Coomassie. It is impossible that either can fall.’ But Coomassie was destroyed after the destruction of Elmina.

“Before we had crossed the Prah, a story came from Akmi that certain omens had alarmed the people of Coomassie; stones fell from heaven; a child was born which spoke from its birth, suddenly it disappeared, and the room was filled with bush. One evil omen did actually occur. Mr. Külm relates that just before he left Coomassie, the old fetish-tree from which the town takes its name, fell down and was shattered to splinters.

“We passed the garden Golgotha (on entering Coomassie)—the carrion-tower, where the bodies of sacrificed victims are deposited; it gave to the whole town an odour of death. I must now explain the philosophy of human sacrifices. Among savage nations it is believed that the body contains a ghost or spirit, or soul, which lives after death. Some believe that this ghost or soul inhabits the grave, and flits around its neighbourhood, and comes to its old home, and frequents the company of those whom it formerly loved. With savages of a higher type it is believed that the souls live in a special world, usually supposed to be under the ground, though some place it above the sky. One step more, and we have the belief of the Persians, and some other ancient nations, that there are two worlds outside the earth, one of torture for the wicked, and one of pleasure for the good.

“Now, it is the belief of savages that not only human bodies have souls, but also animals; and not only animals, but also rivers and trees, and not only things having movement or life, but also inanimate objects—such as food and palm-wine, weapons, beads, articles of clothing, willow-pattern plates, and so forth. So in Western Africa, when a man dies food is placed by his grave, and they say that the spirit of the man eats the spirit or essence of the food. On the Gold Coast the natives believe in a world below the ground—a Hades or Scheol—where the soul of the dead dwells in a life that shall have no end. They also believe that all garments he has worn out will then come to life again—a resurrection of old clothes; but besides this, his relations display their affection by giving him an outfit of weapons, ornaments, war-cloth,

crockery-ware, etc., so that he may descend into hell like a gentleman. But who is to carry these things? And who is to look after them? Evidently his wives and his slaves. So a number of them are killed to keep him company; and often a slave is killed some time after his death to take him a message, or as an addition to his household. In Dahomey this custom of sending messages is organised into a system.

"*Thus originated human sacrifice, which is, granting the truth of the theory on which it is based, a most rational one. Death is disagreeable to us because we do not know where we are going; but to a widow of a chieftain it is merely a surgical operation and a change of existence.* That explains why the Africans submit to death so quietly. A woman at Akropong, selected for sacrifice, was stripped according to custom, but only stunned, not killed. She recovered her senses, and found herself lying on the ground surrounded by dead bodies. She rose, went into the town, where the elders were seated in council, and told them that she had been to the land of the dead, and had been sent back because she was naked. The elders must dress her finely and kill her over again. This accordingly was done."

"The English Governess at the Court of Siam," page 219-220, has recorded the following dreadful occurrence. It throws a lurid light upon the underlying motive which prompts one of the most terrible of ancient customs—namely, the sacrifice of human life for the sanctification of newly-erected buildings. This lady says:—

"While residing within the walls of Bangkok, I learned of the existence of a custom having all the stability and force of a Medo-Persic law. Whenever a command has gone forth from the throne for the erection of a new post, or a new gate, or the reconstruction of an old one, this ancient custom demands, as the first step in the procedure, that three innocent men shall be immolated, and the site selected by the court astrologers, and at their 'auspicious hour.' In 1865 His Majesty and the French Consul at Bangkok had a grave misunderstanding about a proposed modification of a treaty relating to Cambodia. The Consul demanded the removal of the Prime Minister from the Commission appointed to arrange the terms of this treaty. The King replied that it was beyond his power to remove the Prime Minister. Afterwards, the Consul, always irritable and insolent, having nursed his wrath to keep it warm, waylaid the King as he was returning from

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\* Told to Mr. Winwood Reade by a German Missionary residing at Akropong when the circumstance took place.

a temple and threatened him with war, and what not, if he did not accede to his demands. Whereupon the poor King, effectually intimidated, took refuge in his palace, behind barred gates, and forthwith sent messengers to his astrologers, magicians, and soothsayers, to inquire what the situation prognosticated. The magi, and augurs, and all the seventh sons of seventh sons, replied—'The times are full of ill omen. Danger approaches afar. Let His Majesty erect a third gate on the east and on the west.' Next morning, betimes, pick and spade were busy digging deep trenches outside the pair of gates that on the east and west alike protected the palace.

When all was ready, the *San Luang*, or secret council of royal judges, met at midnight in the palace, and dispatched twelve officers to lurk around the new gates until dawn. Two, stationed just within the entrance, assume the character of neighbours and friends; calling loudly to this or that passenger, and continually repeating familiar names. The peasants and market folks, who are always passing at that hour, hearing these calls, stop and turn to see who is wanted. Instantly the myrmidons of the *San Luang* rush from their hiding-places and arrest hap-hazard six of them—three for each gate. From that moment the doom of these astonished, trembling wretches is sealed. No petitions, payments, or prayers can save them. In the centre of the gateway a deep fosse or ditch is dug, and over it, suspended by two cords, an enormous beam. On the 'auspicious' day for the sacrifice, the innocent, unresisting victims—'hinds and churls,' perhaps, of the lowest degree in Bangkok—are mocked with a dainty and elaborate banquet, and then conducted in state to their fatal post of honour. The king and all the court make profound obeisance before them, his majesty adjuring them earnestly '*to guard with devotion the gate now about to be intrusted to their keeping from all dangers and calamities; and to come in season to forewarn him if either traitors within or enemies without should conspire against the peace of his people, or the safety of his throne.*' Even as the last words of exhortation fall from the royal lips, the cords are cut, the ponderous engine crushes the heads of the distinguished wretches, and three Bangkok ragamuffins are metamorphosed into three guardian angels—*Theredah*.

"Siamese citizens of wealth and influence often bury treasure in the earth to save it from arbitrary confiscation. *In such a case, a slave is generally immolated on the spot to make a guardian genius.*"

For curious information regarding the sacrifice amongst Slavonians of human blood at the foundation of houses, the

reader may consult "The Songs of the Russian People, as Illustrative of Slavonic Mythology and Russian Social Life." By W. R. S. Ralston, M.A. (of the British Museum). London: Ellis & Green. 1872. With a noteworthy extract from this learned and interesting book we will conclude this paper:—

"The fact that in Slavonic lands, a thousand years ago, widows used to destroy themselves in order to accompany their dead husbands to the world of spirits, seems to rest on incontestible evidence. And at an earlier period there can be no doubt that 'a rite of suttee, like that of modern India,' prevailed among the heathen Slavonians; the descendants, perhaps, as Mr. Tylor remarks of 'widow sacrifice, among the European nations, of an ancient Aryan rite belonging originally to a period even earlier than the *Veda*.'\* According to Iban Dosta, in some places it was customary for the dead man's favourite wife to hang herself in order that her body might be burnt with that of her lord; in others she was expected to allow herself to be burnt alive with his corpse. . . . In addition to being accompanied by his widow, the heathen Slavonian, if a man of means and distinction, was solaced by the sacrifice of some of his slaves. The fullest description of what occurred on such an occasion is that given by Iban Fozlan, who declares that he was an eye-witness of what took place. According to him, when one of the Russian merchants, with whom he became acquainted in Bulgaria, died, they asked his girls which of them would die with him. One answered she would, whereupon she was handed over to the care of two daughters of an old woman who had the appearance of a yellow, wrinkled wretch, and who bore the name of 'the Angel of Death.' They kept watch over her till the final moment, in which 'the woman named Death's Angel fixed about her neck a twisted rope, which she gave two men to pull,' and at the same time drove a knife in between her ribs, so that she died. Her dead body was then placed beside that of her lord, in a ship, which had been taken from the river for the purpose, and which was propped up by four trees and surrounded by 'wooden images of men and giants.' With the human corpses were placed those of a dog, two horses, and pair of fowls, and finally the ship was set on fire. Just before the girl was killed, says Iban Fozlan, she cried out three times, saying, 'Look! there do I see my father and my mother.' And, again, 'Look! I see my relations sitting together there.' And, finally, 'Look! there is my lord. He sits in Paradise.'

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\* E. B. Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, Vol. I., p. 421, where the subject is discussed at length.

Paradise is so green! so beautiful! By his side are all his men and boys. He calls me; bring me to him!' And after all was over, the 'Russians' scoffed at their Arabian friend as belonging to a race who buried their dead, and so gave them as a prey to worms and corruption; whereas they themselves burnt their dead at once, and so obtained admittance for them without delay into Paradise."

Iban Fozlan's narrative was published in 1823 by the Russian Academy of Sciences, with a German translation by G. C. M. Frähn. Rasmussen had previously translated it into Danish, and an English rendering of his version appeared in Vol. IV. of *Blackwood's Magazine*. Iban Dosta's work was published for the first time in 1869, at St. Petersburg, with notes and a Russian translation by the editor, Professor Chowlson.

A. M. H. W.

#### "STUDIES IN ELEMENTARY PSYCHONOMY."\*

MR. CAMPBELL is an incisive writer, who publishes the first part of his notes under the title of "Scaling Heaven." Parts of this paper express the views that he uttered before the B.N.A.S. on the 11th June, 1880, when he showed how "delusive a knowledge was this, of unexplained but none the less natural fact, when taken hold of by the ignorant and the debased, by people who knew neither the meaning of the words they used, the history of the philosophical and religious systems they proposed to reform, nor the laws of elementary morality recognised even by savages." He further urges that "the pantheon of this vaunted new religion is of a decidedly questionable character, its morality sentimentally pure and practically the reverse, and its priesthood and prophethood usually vulgar and too often unhealthy." The same style of criticism is liberally bestowed. Turning to his metaphysics, we see that he is a "realist" *pur et simple*. For he says "what we call matter, may be merely a mode of the divine thought and have no final existence; but for us it very certainly exists. Again, what Kant calls the faculties of understanding and reason, may be (probably are) modes of one common spiritual action; but for us they are very certainly distinct." Mr. Campbell appears to have a philosophy of the causes of spiritualistic phenomena. We discern in some of the words of this tract what may be called hyper-Ruskinian English. In fact, so permeated has he become with the spirit

\* *Scaling Heaven*, No. 1. By J. A. Campbell.

of Ruskin that he is a vehement lover of purity and accuracy. He points out the confusion which existed in the minds of the pioneers of Spiritualism, of two fundamentally distinct ideas, the ontological and the phenomenal. Carlyle had traced these differences in burning and eloquent words. He points out that the old Aryan groping after the divine which in the learned has had its outcome in physics or metaphysics, in the unlearned merely becomes wonder-hunting. But all these three methods are according to his exegesis, false, inasmuch as they are grounded on the common fallacy that the real can even be reachable through the apparent, and on the vain attempt to understand that which can never be understood, though it may and must be known, if phenomena are to be rightly dealt with. Mr. Campbell proposes that we should commence the study by reverent recognition of the presence of the infinite within ourselves, in our brother-men, and in the earth around ; and by obedience to the inward prompting which bids us also make for righteousness, order, and love. Of course this is only the introductory paper to a vast scheme of forthcoming philosophy, that we shall watch with care. A careful consideration of the views of Roothaan on the faculties and affections of the human soul may help Mr. Campbell (it certainly helps us) in the investigation, which demands the highest metaphysics, and the strict application of the words of Bunsen—

“Father! as upwards I gaze, strengthen my eye and my heart!”

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